Imprimatur

Hic Liber cui titulus,
The Caſes of Scandal
and Perſecution,

Anto. Saunders *Reverendiſſimo in Chriſto Patri ac Domino, Do.* Gilberto *Archi-Epiſcopo* Cantu. *a Sacris domeſticis.*

Ex Ædibus Lambethanis, *Dec. 9.*
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THE CASES OF SCANDAL AND PERSECUTION.

Being a ſeaſonable Inquiry into theſe two Things:

Firſt, Whether thoſe *Nonconformiſts*, who otherwiſe think *Subſcription* lawful, are therefore obliged to forbear it becauſe their *weak Brethren* do judg it unlawful?

Secondly, Whether the Execution of Penal Laws upon *Diſſenters*, for non-communion with the *Church of England*, be Perſecution?

Wherein

They are pathetically exhorted to return into the Boſome of the *Church*, the likelieſt expedient to ſtop the growth of POPERY.

By WILLIAM ASSHETON, D.D. Domeſtick-Chaplain to his Grace the Duke of *ORMOND*.

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BIBLIOTHECA · BODLEIANA

To the Illuſtrious his Grace JAMES *Duke of* Ormond, &c. *Lord Steward of his Majeſty's Houſhold, Chancellor of the Univerſities of* Oxford *&* Dublin, *Knight of the moſt Noble Order of the* Garter, *and one of his Majeſties moſt Honorable* Privy-Council.

May it pleaſe your Grace,

HOW this ſmall Tract will be look'd upon, if at all, by my *diſſenting Brethren*, is no very hard matter to conjecture I

am now sufficiently instructed what entertainment to expect from these men, who are so far from being convinced either with mine, or any other mans Arguments, when inconsistent with their Interest, that (as late experience hath prov'd it) they dare not believe their own. They are so hardned with *Prejudice*, blinded with *passion*, byassed by some false yet plausible *Principle* (wch they must not recant whatever betides them) that till God shall please to mould them, by a method best known to himself, into a more

more humble frame; all the *ſaying* and *writing* in the world will be vain and to no purpoſe. And therefore were it not for theſe two Conſiderations. *Firſt*, in Compaſſion to their poor deluded *Proſelytes*; many of which, having neither Heads nor Hearts to inform themſelves rightly in the true ſtate of Things, do follow tamely after (*qua itur non qua eundum*) in an implicite belief, that that muſt needs be the right way which they ſee ſuch skilful Guids to have taken before them; or elſe were it not, *Secondly*, out of a

due

due care of our own People, to ſecure them, as far as poſſible, from the inſinuating Arts of ſuch as lie in wait to deceive; we might think our ſelves ſufficiently diſcharg'd from any further Debate of theſe points in Controverſie betwixt us; which have been ſo fully diſcuſs'd by ſundry of our Learned men (particularly Bp. *Sanderſon* and Mr. *Hooker*) and ſo excellently clear'd from the Exceptions of Novelliſts; that more need not be ſaid for the Satisfaction of any Intelligent man, that will but firſt take the pains to read the

Books

Books, and then ſuffer himſelf to be Maſter of his own *Reaſon*.

It is theſe *Motives* chiefly, and not any compliance, farther than *Duty* and *Reaſon* require, with the times (the ready *Objection* againſt me: God pardon their unrighteouſneſs who ſo miſjudge) that occaſion'd the publiſhing of this following Treatiſe. The *Charitable* deſign of which, is to direct and inſtruct thoſe *Religious* well-meaning People, whoſe honeſt Simplicity hath been abuſed, and their weak *Con-*

ſciences

Sciences misguided be certain δημαγωγοὶ; that they may if possible, be again reduc'd into their right mind, and then confirm'd and establish'd in their good belief, out of which they have suffer'd themselves to be wrested, by the cunning *Engines* of those that are chief *Factors* for the *Faction*. To which desirable Ends, if (through Gods Blessing) either these, or any other of my slender Labours shall be in the least Instrumental, I shall then little value that *Cloud* of *Calumny*, in which the *Envy* of some, and *Interest* of others have endeavour'd

deavour'd to *obſcure* me.

As to the *Stile*, I muſt confeſs I have deliver'd my Thoughts with ſuch plainneſs and freedom, as a Subject of this nature did ſeem to require; and yet I hope, without all either Gall of bitterneſs or Leaven of partiality. Thoſe that are of a contrary judgment may poſſibly be offended at me (for Guilt we know is gaul'd and tender) and therefore I ſhall remind them; That he who hath commanded us to *pleaſe all men*, doth only require it to their *Edification.*

Whether

Whether in this following Treatiſe I have done *ſo* or *ſo*, I muſt leave to their Judgments that ſhall pleaſe to peruſe it. However, ſuch as it is, I do very humbly preſent it to the Service of *God* and his *Church* under your *Graces* Protection: as unto whom by a double Title it moſt properly belongeth. *Firſt*, in reſpect of that encouraging *Patronage*, together with the acceptance of his former Labours, which the *Author* craves leave, in all humble thankfulneſs, thus publickly to acknowledge. *Secondly*, Becauſe of the End

and

and Design of this present *Work*: which is, by discouraging *Schism*, to preserve *Order* in the *Church*, and *Peace* in the *State*: of both which, under *God* and the *King*, how great a Defence your Grace hath ever been; your eminent *Loyalty* to both their *Majesties* (our present *Sovereign* and his *Royal Father*) expresst in many signal *Actions* and *Sufferings* (too great to be repeated by so mean a Pen as mine) doth abundantly testify.

The God of Heaven multiply his Blessings upon your Grace.

Grace, your eminently pious *Dutcheſs*, and your *Illuſtrious Family*; Continue your *Peace* and *Proſperity* here: and crown you with his *Glory* hereafter. So prayeth,

Your Graces Chaplain in

all Dutiful Obſervance,

William Aſßheton.

The Introduction.

THE late, and I think juſt, apprehenſions of the growth of *Popery* having awakened *Authority* into ſome ſeaſonable Endeavours for the ſuppreſſing of it; The *Clergie* of this Nation have thought themſelves oblig'd, both in *Preſs* and *Pulpit*, to encourage ſo good a work. For, though our People are ſo highly prejudic'd againſt her *Doctrines*; That many of them know no other *Rule*, whereby to judge of the ſoundneſs of their *Tenets*, than by the greater or leſſer diſtance they have from *Popery*; yet being deſirous that *Religion* ſhould be the Object of their *Choice* not *Chance*; and that the practice of it ſhould be grounded upon the clear evidence of *Truth* and *Reaſon*, as well as *Cuſtom* and *Education*, to which the greateſt part of Mankind owe their particular Perſwaſions; Several *Treatiſes* have been lately writ; wherein the *Proteſtant-Catholick Doctrine*

is fully eſtabliſhed; and the *Romiſh Objections*, or rather Flouriſhes, (for indeed they are no better) are as ſolidly anſwered. An Undertaking not altogether ſo unſeaſonable as ſome Perſons, who would be thought wiſer than their *Brethren*, are pleaſed to judge. For, though it be indeed true; *There is nothing new under the Sun:* and the Arguments are ſtill the ſame, at leaſt ſo far as the Cauſe is ſuch: yet the Repetition of them, in this ſcribling Age, can never be unſeaſonable, it being not only profitable but neceſſary, that the *Antidote* be applied as often as the *Poiſon* is infuſed.

This very *Conſideration* (that I may give my *Reader* ſome ſhort Account of the following *Diſcourſe*) hath awakened me into Action. Not out of any vain Confidence of my *Abilities* (though we are all apt to think well of our ſelves) but rather out of a juſt ſenſe of my *Duty* (remembring the ſad Doom of the unprofitable Servant) That I might contribute ſomething to the Defence of my Dear Mother *the Church of England*; which through the good Providence of God hath nouriſhed me up *a Chriſtian* and *a Proteſtant*.

In

In order to this performance, I had made a collection of ſome ſutiable Materials againſt the *Church of Rome* (at preſent the moſt noted Enemy of our *Religion*) fully intending to have put them into *form*, and, with the approbation of my *Superiors*, at the beginning of *Term*, to make them publick. Whilſt I was thus deſigning I occaſionally met with this paſſage in Biſhop *Sanderſon*. "Prudent *Statiſts* forbear to "advance againſt *a potent Enemy* abroad "till they have compoſed ſmaller *Quar-* "*rels* and *Mutinies* at home. We think "it therefore more needful, ſeaſonable, "and expedient, to clear theſe *Points in* "*difference* betwixt us and *our Brethren* at "home, then to handle any of the *Contro-* "*verſies* in debate betwixt us and thoſe "of *Rome*. Both becauſe the People are "in more danger of being miſled by *theſe*, "then of being ſeduced by *Papiſts*; and be- "cauſe the *Papiſts* make a great advantage "(indeed the greateſt, and in a manner the "whole advantage they have againſt us) of "theſe *home-Differences*.

Thus that excellent *Prelate*; whoſe judicious Determination ſo perfectly altered my purpoſe (this is a plain and true hearted confeſſion) that quite contrary to my

former intentions (leaving the *Romaniſt* to the management of ſome abler Pens) I have once more thought it my duty to Addreſs my ſelf to my *Brethren* of the *Separation*, humbly intreating them for the love of *God*, and the comfort of their own *Souls*; as they tender the Peace of the Church, and the honour of our *Religion*; and in compaſſion to thouſands of their *Chriſtian Brethren*, who are otherwiſe in great danger to be either miſled or *ſcandaliz'd*; That, having firſt thought it poſſible for themſelves to be miſtaken, they would then not over-haſtily reject, either *mine* or any *other* mans Admonitions, becauſe tender'd by thoſe who ſtand better affected to their *Perſons* than *Opinions*. They have indeed, upon occaſion, been fully reminded of their Duty (and 'tis Charity you know to inſtruct our *weak Brethren*) but they are ſo vainly exalted with the *Plaudits* of their own *Parties*, with whom they chiefly converſe, that ſome further *Advice* may be no unſeaſonable undertaking.

Experience hath prov'd it, that to be *Popular* and applauded is a very pleaſing thing. To be cheriſhed and courted by ſuch Perſons as may think us in ſome meaſure

meaſure qualified for their black deſigns, is at *firſt* very grateful to the *fleſh*, but in the *end*, without Repentance it will prove bitterneſs to the *Spirit*. However in the *interim* is it not juſtly deplorable, that men otherwiſe of excellent *Parts* and Improvements; which might be eminently ſerviceable to the *Church of God*, ſhould thus abuſe their *Learning* to the maintenance of a *Schiſm*; and inſtead of winning *Souls* to *Heaven*, with buſie and curſed diligence compaſs Sea and Land to draw *Proſelytes* to a *Party*.

The Reflection is very ſeaſonable, ſhould I remind them of this Truth, That next to the burying of our Talents through Sloth, Idleneſs or Debauchery (the *Devil's* firſt Temptation to all pregnant flouriſhing Improvements) his chief onſet, in which he too often prevails, is out of a pretended neglect of mens parts and worth to chafe them into a *Faction*. By which ambitious workings of ſome turbulent diſcontented *Spirits*, Chriſtendom is more endamaged, than by all the open Prophaneneſs and Debauchery in the World. For this latter is ſo groſs and palpable, and of ſuch noted Obſervation, that no man, without the higheſt violence to the Principles of Rea-

ſon, can with any confidence, attempt its vindication. But in the other, *Satan doth ſo transform himſelf into an Angel of Light*; There is ſuch gilding, plaiſtering, and varniſhing of their ugly deſigns, with, *The care of Souls*; *The Glory of God*; *The Reformation of Abuſes*; That men of good *hearts*, but weak *heads*, are by theſe painted outſides very frequently impoſed on.

I do really compaſſionate theſe poor deluded People; many of which I am confident, as to the main intention, are truly *Religious*; their chief deſign being to ſave their Souls and come to Heaven. And accordingly I earneſtly beg of our good God (without whoſe Bleſſing all other endeavours are ineffectual) that by reducing them into their right *mind*, I might be in ſome meaſure ſerviceable to ſo deſirable a *Work*. But I am afraid, they are ſo ſtrangely *prejudic'd* by the cunning artifice of their deſigning Guides that till this *averſion* be remov'd, there is a *moral impoſſibility* of prevailing with them.

For when it is demanded (the likelieſt method to bring the Controverſie to ſome Iſſue) whence it may appear; that the Con-

Conſtitutions of the *Church of England* are ſo unlawful as is pretended? After ſome trifling *Evaſions*, as their practice is, the ultimate *Reſolution* of thoſe that deal plainly and ingeniouſly is this: *For my own part I muſt confeſs, I do not very well underſtand theſe things; I am no Schollar, and ſo cannot diſpute the caſe with you. But there are ſeveral honeſt Non-conforming Miniſters, whom I think to be very Learned and Religious men, that have often told me ſo; and I am willing to believe them.* But now a little further to diſcover the *Cheat*, If you ask even theſe *Teachers* themſelves; How *they* come to be aſſur'd, that any of our *Ceremonies* are unlawful? And ſince whatever is unlawful is contrary to ſome *Law*, if you ask them, for inſtance, by what Dictate of the Law of *Nature*, or by what Text of Scripture, the Uſe of the *Surplice*, kneeling at the *Euchariſt*, the *Croſs* after *Baptiſm, &c.* are forbidden? After ſome miſerable exploded ſhuffling (*non audita refero ſed experta*) their ſureſt *Aſylum* where they neſtle themſelves is this: *that though they dare not declare theſe things to be intrinſecally unlawful* (*God forbid they ſhould condemn ſo many Godly Conformiſts*) *yet ſince ſeveral good People do think them ſo, and can-*

not by any means be reconciled to them; therefore leſt the progreſs of the Goſpel ſhould be ſtopt, or weak Brethren ſcandaliz'd; upon this very Account they think them unlawful, and as ſuch are oblig'd to forbear them. Having found by experience that this *Reflection*, how weak ſoever in it ſelf, hath no little prevail'd with ſome very ſober Perſons, I have thought it worth the while to give a due Conſideration to,

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THE

THE CASE OF Scandal.

WHich that I may the more effectually perform, I ſhall firſt lay down the *Objection* to the greateſt advantage of the *Objectors*, and then Reſolve it with as much plainneſs as I can.

Objection.

There being, *ſay they*, in the *holy Goſpel* ſuch dreadful *Woes* denounc'd againſt *the man by whom the Offence cometh*: we hope it will be eſteem'd no unneceſſary Scruple, if we be very fearful of *offending* any of thoſe *little ones* that believe in Chriſt: many

ny of which, as we daily obſerve, cannot yet receive any *Satisfaction*; either that *Conformity* is lawful, or that thoſe who ſubmit to it are any better than temporizing wretches, men of proſtituted *Conſciences*, not fit to be intruſted with the care of *Souls*. And therefore ſhould *we*, who are of much eminency and eſteem amongſt them, and whoſe *Example* will be much looked upon, ſhould *we* by our preſent practice approve, what theſe honeſt ſober *Religious* good *People* condemn; how might this tempt them to *blaſpheme* the way of *ſerious holineſs* as a meer Politick contrivance, ſince they obſerve, That, though the breath of *Religion* fills the Sails, yet *Profit* is ſtill the Compaſs. And therefore for our own parts, though we dare not *cenſure* thoſe that do *Subſcribe* (if their own hearts condemn them not, neither do we) yet we think it more *eligible*, for the preſent diſtreſs, to be *ſilent* (and the good *Lord* pardon us if we think amiſs) than by our *Conformity* to hazard ſo many precious Souls for whom Chriſt dyed.

Anſwer.

That I may give a full and ſatisfactory *Anſwer* to this plauſible *Objection*, I ſhall con-

conſider theſe *two* things. Firſt *in theſi*. I ſhall ſhew what it is to *Scandalize*. Secondly in *hypotheſi*, I ſhall endeavour to evince; That thoſe N. C. who think *Subſcription* lawful (and to theſe only I am now addreſſing my ſelf) are really, according to the true Theological Notion of the word, very highly guilty of that *Scandal* through their preſent *Silence*, which by their *Conformity* they might eaſily avoid. But before I attempt any *particular* explication of *Scandal*, I muſt crave leave to remind my *Reader* of a very common yet dangerous *miſtake*: which I cannot better expreſs than in the words of the Reverend Mr. *Baxter*, in his *Cure of Church Diviſions*, p. 133.

'Indeed the word [*Offend*] hath occaſi-
'oned the miſtake of many, to the great
'enſnaring of themſelves and others. *Of-*
'*fending* ſometimes ſignifieth only diſplea-
'ſing or grieving another. And this is
'not the *Scandal* which the Scripture ſpeaks
'againſt. Abundance of well-meaning
'*people* have thought, that they muſt not
'uſe any *form*, or *words*, or *order*, or *action*
'(eſpecially if it be indifferent in it ſelf)
'which others are diſpleaſed or griev'd at:
'becauſe they think that is *Scandal*. Many
perſons

'persons pretend the avoiding of *Scandal*, 'only to flatter *one party*, and to preserve 'their Reputation and Interest with that 'Side which they are lotheſt to *diſpleaſe*. 'And thus *every Sect* ſaith: If you do this 'or that, you will *ſcandalize* and offend ma-'ny *good People*; meaning their *own Side*. 'But they never regard how many others 'they ſhall really *ſcandalize* by the con-'trary.

'But conſider I beſeech you: If bare *diſ-'pleaſing* had been *Scandal*, then *Peeviſhneſs* 'and *Ignorance* would have advanced all 'that had them to be the Governours of 'the World. For what is it to *govern*, but 'to have all others obliged to fulfill '*your wills*? And if no man muſt *diſpleaſe* 'you, then all muſt *fulfil* your *wills* And 'he is *ſcandalous* that is not *ruled* by you. 'And if this were ſo: the moſt *childiſh* and '*womaniſh* ſort of *Chriſtians*, who have the '*weakeſt Judgments* and the *ſtrongeſt Wills* 'and *Paſſions*, muſt *rule* all the *world*: for 'theſe are hardlieſt *pleas'd*, and no man muſt '*diſpleaſe* them.

This being premis'd, I hope we ſhall find no great difficulty about the nature of *Scandal*. For however *Philology* may criticize

ticize the word; it denotes (as the learned * *Hooker* informes us) no more but thus: *Men are ſcandaliz'd when they are moved, led or provoked unto ſin.* Wherein we are not ſo much to look at the event what that is, or may be; as at the cauſe whence it cometh. For no man is concern'd in any *ſcandal* that hapeneth to another, by occaſion of any thing done by him, neither is chargable with it further than he is guilty of having given it.

* *Eccleſ. Pol. pag.* 115.

Now (according to the moſt judicious Biſhop * *Sanderſon*, who is beſt able to inſtruct us in the Caſe) a man may become guilty of *ſcandalizing another* by his Example theſe *four ways*.

* *Five Caſes of Conſc. p.* 111.

The *Firſt* is, when a Man doth ſome-
'thing before another Man, which is in it
'ſelf *evil*, *unlawful*, and *ſinful*; Becauſe
'whatſoever is in it ſelf, and in its own
'nature *evil*, is alſo of it ſelf and in its
'own nature *ſcandalous*, and of *evil example*.
'Here the Rule is, *Do nothing that is evil*
'*for fear of giving ſcandal.*

'The *ſecond way* is, when a Man doth
'ſomething before another, with a *direct intention*

'*tention* and formal purpose of drawing 'him thereby to *commit sin*. Here the Rule 'is, *Do nothing (good or evil) with an inten-* '*tion to give scandal.*

'The *third way* is, when a man doth 'something before another, which in it 'self is not *evil*, but *indifferent*, and so ac- 'cordingly to the Rule of *Christian Liberty* '*lawful* for him to *do*, or not to *do*, as he 'shall see *cause* (yea and perhaps other- 'wise *commodious* and *convenient* for him to '*do*) yet whereat he probably *foreseeth* the 'other will *take Scandal*, and be occasion- 'ed thereby to do *evil*. In such case if the 'thing to be done, be not in some degree '(at least prudentially) *necessary* for him 'to *do*; but that he might, without great '*inconvenience* and *prejudice* to *himself*, and 'any *third person*, leave it *undone*, he is 'bound in *charity* and *compassion* to his *Bro-* '*ther's soul* (for whom Christ died) and for 'the avoiding of *Scandal*, to *abridge* himself in the exercise of his *Christian Liberty* for that time so far, as rather to suffer some *inconvenience* himself by the not *doing* of it, than by *doing* of it to cause his *Brother* to *offend*. The very Case which is so of- ten, and so largely and so earnestly insisted

upon

upon by St. *Paul*, Rom. 14. 13—21. & 15. 1--3. 1 *Cor.* 8. 7–13. & 9. 12, 22. & 10. 23, 33. Here the Rule is, *Do nothing that may be reasonably forborn, whereat it is like Scandal will be taken.*

The *fourth way* is, when a man doth something before another, which is not only *lawful*, but (according to the exegencies of present Circumstances *pro hic & nunc*) very *behoofeful*, and in some sort, prudentially *necessary* for him to do; but foreseeth in the *beholder* a propension to make an *ill use* of it, and to take encouragement thereby to *commit Sin*, if there be not withal a great care had to *prevent*, as much as is possible, the *Scandal* that might be taken thereat: for *Qui non prohibet peccare cum potest, jubet.* In such case the bare *neglect* of his *Brother*, and not using his utmost endeavour to prevent the *evil* that might ensue, makes him guilty. In this last Case the thing is not (for the danger of the Scandal) to be *left undone*, supposing it, as we now do, otherwise *behoofful* to be done; but the *action* is to be ordered, and carried on by us, for the *manner* of *doing*, and in all Respects and Circumstances thereunto belonging,

'longing, with so much *clearness*, *tender-*
'*ness*, and *moderation* and *wisdom*, that so
'many as are willing to take notice
'of it, may be *satisfied* that there was on
'our part a reason of *just necessity* that the
'thing should be done. Here the *Rule* is,
'*Order the doing of that, which may not well*
'*be left undone, in such sort, that no Scandal*
'*may, through your default, be taken thereat.*

Thus that learned and incomparable *Prelate*: according to whose *Rules* (which upon examination will be found right *good ones*) let us proceed to inquire, how the case stands with my *Brethren*; *i. e.* let us consider from which of these *four wayes* it is, that their *Subscription* and *Conformity* would involve them in the guilt of *Scandal.*

The *first Rule* I am sure doth nothing concern them. Because *subscription* is so far from being sinful, that, according to the present Supposition, it is not only *lawful*, but also (the case of Scandal remov'd) confessedly their *Duty.*

The *second Rule* I dare freely and *ex animo* acquit them from. I have more *Charity*,

rity for them then to think; that any of them would *ſubſcribe* with a direct intention and formal purpoſe of drawing other men, by their *Example*, to commit any Sin.

As to the *third Rule*, I muſt confeſs; there is a very tender regard to be had to the *Conſciences* of weak Chriſtians, as thoſe Scriptures cited out of St. *Paul's* Epiſtles do abundantly prove. But that this is no encouragement to my *Brethrens* Silence, doth eaſily appear by conſidering, That the ſubject matter of that forbearance and indulgence which the *Apoſtle* in thoſe places requireth, muſt be ſomething ſo *purely indifferent*; as that it may be either *done* or elſe left *undone*, and both theſe without Sin. And ſuch, I am ſure, *Subſcription* is not; it being (as was formerly hinted) no *indifferent action*, but *a neceſſary Duty*. Which *aſſertion*, how peremptory ſoever it may be thought, I do thus farther prove from the words of Mr. *Baxter*, whoſe *Authority* though it may not ſtill prevail with them, yet his Reaſon ſhould.

† *If Scripture make it not a* Sin, *The Magiſtrates command will make it a Duty.* †*Princip. of Love*, p. 87.

But Scripture *doth not make Conformity a* Sin (for I am now treating with those that think it lawful)

Ergo *his Majesties Command, in the Act of Uniformity, doth make it a Duty.*

We see then that *Subscription* is a *Duty*. But my *Brethren* will reply, the avoiding of *Scandal* is likewise a *Duty*. We are commanded to obey *Authority*, and we are likewise commanded not to offend our weak *Brethren*. How must we therefore behave our selves, since something must of necessity be done: either we must *subscribe*, and then we are censur'd as *uncharitable*; or else not *subscribe*, and then we are accus'd as *disobedient*.

For the untying of this knot we are to *compare* the Cases of *Scandal* and *Disobedience* together; that so we may be able to judge, when there seemeth to be a repugnancy betwixt them, whether of the *two* is the *greater Duty*, that so the *other* as the *less*, when it stands in competition with it, may cease to *oblige*.

Now for this the *Rule* is certain and equitable;

equitable; That the reſpect of *private Scandal* ceaſeth, where lawful *Authority* determineth our *liberty*: and that reſtraint which proceedeth from *ſpecial Duty*, is of ſuperiour Reaſon to that which proceedeth but from *common Charity*; and that we ought to bear a greater regard to our *Publick Governours*, then to our *private Brethren*; and be more careful to *obey* them, then ſatisfie theſe; if the ſame courſe will not in ſome mediocrity ſatisfie both. And the Reaſon is; Becauſe where we are not able to diſcharge both; *Debts of Juſtice* are to be paid before *Debts of Charity*, *Juſtitiæ officia ſunt priora, et ſtrictioris obligationis, quam illa quæ ſunt Charitatis.* Ameſ. Medul. Theol. p. 62. Now the Duty of *Obedience* is *debitum Juſtitiæ*, and a matter of *right*: my Superior may challenge it at my hands as his *due*; and I do him wrong if I withhold it from him. But the care of *not giving offence* is but *debitum Charitatis*, and a matter but of Courteſie. I am to perform it to my Brother in *Love*, when I ſee cauſe: but he cannot challenge it from me as his right; nor can juſtly ſay I do him wrong if I neglect it. It is therefore no more lawful for me, to diſobey the lawful Command of a Superiour, to pre-

vent thereby the offence of one or a few Brethren; than it is lawful for me to do one man *wrong*, to do another a Courteſie withal; or than it is lawful for me to rob the *Exchequer*, to relieve an *Hoſpital*. For it is agreed by conſent of all that handle the matter of *Scandal*: That, We may not commit any Sin whatſoever, be it never ſo ſmall, for the avoiding of any *Scandal*, be it never ſo great: *But* to diſobey lawful Authority in lawful things, is a Sin againſt the *fift* Commandment. *Therefore* we may not redeem a *Scandal* by ſuch our *Diſobedience*, nor refuſe to do the thing commanded by ſuch Authority, whoſoever ſhould take offence thereat.

If this do not yet ſatisfie my Brethren, but that they can ſtill, *bona fide*, Declare; That if it were not for fear of *ſcandalizing* weak Chriſtians they would *conform*: I ſhall then deſire them ſeriouſly to *peruſe* the Works of that judicious Caſuiſt Biſhop *Sanderſon*; particularly his fifth Sermon *ad Pop.* Sect. 30. p. 292. fol. Edit. and his twelfth Serm. *ad Aul.* Sect. 36. &c. p. 248. But I doubt they are ſo afraid of *Conviction*, that they dare not peruſe ſuch *Strength* and *Reaſon*.

The

The *fourth way* will nothing relieve them, which doth not indulge them to neglect the thing becauſe others may accidentally be *ſcandaliz'd* at it (ſince the beſt things may by accident produce evil effects) but only requires ſuch a prudent management, whereby, as far as poſſible, all offence may be removed*. " For, if we are to forbear all our " conveniences and matters of expediency, " when men are ſcandalized at them, after " we have given them, or offered to give " them full information; our Chriſtian " Liberty in things indifferent would in " theſe our times come to be juſt nothing: " nay our ſervitude would be greater, and " more unſuportable than that of the Jews " under the Levitical Ceremonies. † But " now againſt this may be *objected* the reſo- " lution of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 8. 13. *If meat* " *make my Brother to offend, I will eat no fleſh* " *while the world ſtandeth, leſt I make my* " *Brother to offend:* Fleſh is of great expe- " diency for the nouriſhment of mans life, " and yet *Paul* reſolves upon a perpetual " abſtinence therefrom in caſe of Scandal " conſequent. And this example of *Paul* " is obligatory unto all Chriſtians.

* Jeanes *Mixture of Schol. and Pract. Divinity, 2d part*, p. 133

† *Id.* p. 135.

" For *Anſwer*; *firſt* this fleſh may be un-

" derstood only of such as was sacrificed un-
" to Idols; for words in Scripture usually
" are to be restrained unto the subject mat-
" ter spoken of: and the meat and flesh
" here spoken of in the Context, was such
" as had been offered unto an Idol.

" Secondly, *Calvin* resolveth that 'tis an
" *Hyperbole: est, inquit, hyperbolica locutio,*
" *quia vix possibile est, ut quis a carnibus totâ*
" *vitâ abstineat, si remaneat in communi vi-*
" *ta*, &c.

" *Thirdly*, *Paul* is to be understood, on-
" ly upon supposition that the Gospel
" should not be fully promulgated, and
" Brethren should remain uninstructed con-
" cerning the nature of Christian Liberty;
" for usually 'tis in this case only, that to
" eat flesh involves in the guilt of an active
" scandal: makes a Brother to offend.
*Id. p. 133. " * But now if thy Brother refuse, and con-
" temn information: the shelter of weak-
" ness is thereby taken from him, his judg-
" ment being now overshadowed no longer
" with a meer weakness arising out of simple
" Ignorance; but with a proud, and way-
" ward, if not envious and malicions per-
" verseness, that is accompanied with a gross
wilful

" wilful, and affected ignorance. He is " no longer then to be accounted a weak " one, but a proud and wilful one, and for " his peeviſhneſs thou mayſt chooſe whe- " ther thou wilt forgo thy Liberty.

It appears therefore from Mr. *Jeanes* (whoſe words I have thus largely recited becauſe of his Authority amongſt the *Preſbyterians*) that my *Brethren* are not *eo nomine*, obliged to neglect *Conformity* becauſe their Proſelytes may think fit to be offended at them: but only (according to this our *fourth Rule*) they are ſo to manage their Submiſſion to the Church with ſuch a Chriſtian deportment, whereby it may appear to others as well as themſelves, that *Conſcience* not *Intereſt* hath occaſioned their Subſcription.

Concerning which (that we may conſider the Caſe in *genere deliberativo*) with ſubmiſſion to men of better Judgments and Experience, I give my advice as followeth:

Firſt, That having firſt made a *private* and humble *Confeſſion* to Almighty God of their former *Schiſm*; they would then be perſwaded to do it *publickly* for the ſatis-

faction of the *Church*. Which having perform'd, if their *Confession* be full and sincere, they are then qualified for *Absolution*; the likelieſt expedient to bring true Comfort and Satisfaction to their *Souls*. Poſſibly this may ſeem a very difficult task to *fleſh* and *blood*; and, as ſuch, may be rejected, not without ſome ſcorn, by my *Brethren* of the *Separation*. For, we are neither careful beforehand (ſuch is the depravedneſs of our hearts) to do well: nor yet willing afterwards (through the pride of our ſpirits) to acknowledge we have done amiſs. But let me tell them with all faithful plainneſs (for 'tis no trifling about Eternity) That as *he who confeſſeth and forſaketh his Sin, ſhall find Mercy*; ſo this *Confeſſion* muſt be in ſome meaſure proportionable to the Crimes committed. And therefore, though in *Sins* of daily incurſion and *weakneſs*; or even in greater *wickedneſs* when ſecretly managed, ſo that no great Scandal be occaſioned to others; in ſuch a caſe, though it be ſufficient to *confeſs* immediatly to *Almighty God*: yet as to Publick and Scandalous Sins I muſt aſſure them, That it is a ſafe and ſure Rule (and I heartily wiſh it were practiſed accordingly) *Publick Sins require publick Confeſſion.*

Se-

2*dly*; That having thus made their *Peace* with *God*, they would then conſult the *Peace* of the *Church*, by inſtructing their weak Brethren. *Tu converſus, confirma Fratres*, is the Preacher's *Motto*. Which I do the more earneſtly preſs upon them; becauſe if any good may be done upon their poor deluded *Proſelytes*, it is they that muſt do it: others being ſo far excluded by *Prejudice*, that ſhould they expreſs themſelves with the greateſt *perſpicuity* that human Abilities can furniſh them withal; nay, could they ſpeak not only with the Tongues of *Men*, but even of *Angels*; yet their moſt convincing Inſtructions would no more prevail with theſe People, than the choiceſt *Muſick* can affect the *Ear* that is ſtopt up; or the moſt proper *Phyſick* operate upon him, that either cannot or will not take it.

I do therefore earneſtly beſeech my *Brethren*, in the bowels and in the name of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, and by all the love they bear to God's holy Truth which they ſeem ſo much to ſtand for; nay, I do even require and charge them, as they will anſwer the contrary to *God*, the *Church*, and their own *Conſciences*; that they would approve themſelves faithful, by giving their beſt diligence

ligence to inform the *Judgments* of others (especially those that have their Persons in Admiration) concerning the nature and use of indifferent things: and (as in love to their souls they are bound) that they would not humour them in their *pernicious Errors*, nor suffer them to continue therein for want of their *Rebuke* either in their publick Teaching, or otherwise as they shall have opportunity thereunto. That if they themselves are perswaded (as I doubt not but many of them are) of the *lawfulness* of our *Liturgy*, the wearing of the *Surplice*, kneeling at the *Eucharist*, the *Cross* after Baptism, with the rest of our *Constitutions*; that they would then be so candid and ingenuous, as by a free and publick *Declaration* of their minds, to remove those unnecessary *Scruples*, which (to promote their own private *Interests*) they had formerly cherished and fomented.

Thirdly; That having given this Satisfaction to themselves, and others; they would then be careful to adorn their *Profession* with a suitable *Practice*. That having submitted themselves to the Government of the *Church*, they would do it *chearfully*, and with a ready mind; *not grudgingly* or *as of necessity*.

ceſſity. Wherein I cannot but occaſionally bewail the ſad condition of our Church; which is more betrai'd, hath receiv'd more wounds, by her ſeeming *Friends* than open *Enemies.* Men *who ſerve not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own Bellies:* who creep to the *Altar* to devour her *Morſels*; as if they were only put into the *Prieſts* Office for a piece of Bread. And that I may more fully explain my ſelf, I intend ſuch Perſons, who having *ſubſcrib'd* her Conſtitutions, and thereby given the higheſt aſſurance of their ſubmiſſion, can yet be ſo far a contradiction to themſelves, as out of a vain compliance with ſome People to declare; *That for their parts though they are not fond of Conformity, and could heartily wiſh it had never been impoſed; yet they think it prudence ſo far to comply with the Times as to ſubmit to theſe things; they having now no other way to live, but by the exerciſe of their Miniſtry; To which Function (the Times being then more favourable) they were educated and brought up.*

And accordingly in *praxi*, when they are called to execute the Miniſterial *Function*) if they may do it ſafely, and without *Cenſure*) 'tis ordinary, without any remorſe,

remorse, (to the great *Scandal* of poor People, and the hardning them in their *Errors*) upon all occasions to neglect the *Constitutions* of the *Church*, *e. g.* If *a zealous Brother* shall desire to have his Child *Baptiz'd* without the sign of the *Cross*; it shall then very gravely be censur'd as a suspicious practice, and omitted accordingly. Another perhaps is too stiff to kneel at the *Communion*, and desires to use his own *Gesture*; he is readily told, he may do his pleasure. And suitable to this: Though it cannot be avoided but that the *Prayers* of the Church must be read: yet they are so carelessly posted over, that the People very easily understand: they are not perform'd as an act of *Devotion*, but rather as an imposed *task*, which must of necessity be first dispatch'd, before the Service for which they are met together can be duly perform'd. All which, together with the rest of their complying behaviour, doth fully confirm this Observation of Mr. *Baxter* (*Defence of the Principles of Love*, p. 31) *I foresaw how many Ministers and People that did conform with a grudging Conscience, would do more at last to undermine the Impositions, than the Nonconformists.* This Witness is true: and accordingly I have good

warrant

warrant from the Apoſtle, to *Rebuke them ſharply, that they may be ſound in the Faith.* In order to which I might juſtly aſſure them, That how-ever they may applaud themſelves with the title of *Moderate Men* (I know it will not pleaſe them, but I muſt ſpeak it out, both for the Truths ſake and theirs) *They are the very peſt and bane of the Church:* And if ever *God* ſhall open their eyes (which is heartily pray'd for) they will then acknowledg, this is no invidious Cenſure, but a very reaſonable Reflection.

But I will reſtrain my ſelf howſoever. *Indignation*, though juſt, is not alwayes to be expreſt. *The wrath of man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God.* In ſhort, if *God* be *God* follow him, but if *Baal* be *God* follow him. If *Conformity* be *lawful*, ſubmit to it heartily and without reſpect. And as to thoſe falſe Brethren, who are brought in privily and unawares, to ſpy out our Liberty which we have in *Chriſt Jeſus*, that they might bring us into bondage: to ſuch give not place, no nor for an hour, that the truth of the *Goſpel* may continue with you. Why ſhould ye any longer be ſubject to thoſe Superſtitious Ordinances. *Touch not, taſte not, handle not. Wear not, Kneel not,*

Croſs

Croſs not? Stand faſt therefore in the Liberty wherewith Chriſt hath made us free, and be not again intangled with the yoak of bondage.

But if *Baal* be *God*: If *Conformity* be *unlawful*, if having beg'd Direction from the Father of Lights in hearty Prayer, and having uſed all moral diligence to ſatisfie your Conſciences, you cannot as yet be perſwaded of the lawfulneſs of it: O do not dare, for any outward reſpect whatſoever, to go againſt the light and checks of Conſcience, *Quod fit contra conſcientiam ædificat ad Gehennam*, is a noted truth.

When any of my *Brethren* are convinc'd (as tis hop'd ſome of them may, having calmly conſider'd the true ſtate of things) let them obſerve theſe *three Rules*, and they may be confident, the Ignorance or peeviſhneſs of others ſhall never involve them in the guilt of *Scandal*.

Having thus diſpatch'd the firſt part of my Aſſertion, *viz.* That my Brethrens Conformity is not *ſcandalous*, as is pretended (which if it were, ſome of the *four* Rules would certainly hold them, and you ſee upon Examination they have fairly eſcap'd

ſcap'd them all) I now proceed to the ſecond Propoſal, *viz.* That they are highly guilty of that Scandal by their preſent *Silence*, which by their *Conformity* they might eaſily avoid. Which is thus prov'd. Men are ſcandaliz'd (as I hinted before) when they are led, moved, or provoked unto Sin: But the *Non-conformiſts* by their preſent Silence do lead, move and provoke their Proſelytes to Sin; *Therefore*, they are beyond excuſe guilty of Scandal. The *Major* I am ſure will be granted. The *Minor* admits of this ſad Confirmation.

The N. C. do provoke their Proſelytes to ſin theſe *two wayes*: Firſt, by Error in *Judgment*. Secondly, by occaſioning them to neglect their Duty in *Praxi*.

Firſt, By an *Erroneous Judgment*; in condemning the *Conſtitutions* of the Church as unlawful, upon which the holy Scripture hath caſt no ſuch impurity. The ſad conſequents of which are vain *Superſtitions*, uncharitable *Cenſures*, malicious *Reflections*, bitter *Contentions*, contempt of *Superiors*, perplexities of *Conſcience*; with many other Miſchiefs, of which it were a happy thing for theſe Nations if the known noted

ted behaviour of the *Nonconformists* would suffer us to be ignorant. Nor will it advantage their Cause, as is usual, to reply; That they meddle not with these things; nor do they ever make it their design in any of their Sermons, to prove the unlawfulness of them: For, *Quid verba audiam cum facta loquuntur*, Since their very Silence doth preach it, and that more effectually than the best Arguments they can be able to produce. For their *Proselytes* (as indeed most other men) being led by *Example* more than *Precept*, and observing so many Learned and Godly Divines (as they are pleased to call them) to neglect these Impositions: they are thence, as they think, upon good grounds encouraged to pronounce them unlawful.

Secondly, By occasioning them to neglect their Duty in *practice*. Which (to omit *Publick Prayers*, and other Instances that might easily be enforc'd) doth too sadly appear in the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*: That it is as necessary as either *Preaching*, or any other Duty of the *Christian Oeconomy*, is so confessed a Truth, that no man who hath not renounc'd his Christianity can have the confidence to deny

ny it. But alas! men are not ſo forward to perform known Duties as they ſhould be. And as to this Sacrament, there needs no other evidence of its neglect, than the bare confeſſion of the *Criminals* themſelves, who are ſo far from being aſhamed of ſuch omiſſion, that with no ſmall boaſting (as if they gloried in their Sin) they will vauntingly tell us: You may thank the *Prelats* for this, who, by their rigorous Impoſition of that geſture of *Kneeling*, do drive well-diſpoſed Chriſtians from the Table of the Lord.

But now, if theſe Proſelytes of the *Separation* ſhould be examined (and it is a warrantable *Inquiſition*) whence this Geſture comes to be unlawful: their ultimate Reſolution is this; That their Preachers (who they are confident have good Reaſon for their Actions) have thought fit to forbear it: which they are aſſur'd they would not do had they not ſufficient cauſe, though unknown to them, for ſuch their forbearance. Whoever theſe *Preachers* are (be their *Learning* and *Piety* otherwiſe what it will) if having granted *Kneeling* to be a lawful Geſture; they ſhall yet omit, either through *Negligence* or *Deſign*, to inſtruct

their *Proselytes* herein; When I have first reminded them of that known Rule; *Qui non prohibet dum potest jubet:* I must then give it this sad enforcement (and I beseech God they may consider it before it is too late) *Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a Milstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea. Wo unto the World because of Offences: for it must needs be that Offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh,* Mat. 18. 6, 7.

And now good Christian Reader, if thou art *homo quadratus*, perfectly even, and unbyes'd both in thy *Judgment* and *Affection*, (that is to say, neither *prepossessed* with some *false Principle* to *forestall* the one; nor carried aside with *partiality* for, or *prejudice* against, any *Person* or *Party*, to *corrupt* the other) judge I beseech thee betwixt the *Church of England* and these *Dissenters*.

These men pretend, they cannot lawfully, and with a good Conscience submit to the *Constitutions* of the *Church*. But why all this niceness? Is there any *Law*, either *natural* or *positive*; which doth either

ther *directly* and *in terminis*, or by good *Logical Inference*, and immediate deduction condemn any of them as *unlawful*? If ſo; let ſuch *Law* be produc'd, and the Controverſie is it an end. But they have been ſo infinitely baffled in ſuch vain attempts; that this procedure of late hath not been much pretended: but inſtead of ſuch plain, and candid entertainment, we have been ſhuffled off with the empty pretences of an *accidental unlawfulneſs*, ariſing from the Diſſatisfaction of their *Proſelytes*, who yet imbibed thoſe Scruples from the repeated clamours of their now *diſſenting Teachers*.

So that in ſhort, the vizard being worn off, the *juggle* is now very intelligible: and 'tis plainly this,

The Intereſt of theſe factious *Preachers* (ariſing from an envious Deſign againſt the Church) did at firſt prejudice ſeveral honeſt well-meaning People againſt her *Conſtitutions*: and now that very *Prejudice* is made the greateſt, I had almoſt ſaid the only Argument to perpetuate the *Schiſm*. *Muli ſe mutuo ſcabunt* — would give good occaſion for a Satyrical Reflection. But I am ſerious.

How they that are guilty of such *Hypocrisie* will be able to make answer for their *insincerity* before the Tribunal of *the great Judge* at that *his Day* (if yet they that do such things can really believe there is any such thing as a *Day of Judgment* to come) I leave it to their *own Judgments* in this *their day* to consider.

Possibly their *Lay-Proselytes* may here reply (for I observe, these People are very loth to yeeld, so long as they can find any thing to plead for themselves)

The second Objection, under which is considered the Case *of* Persecution.

YOu who are *Scholars* are enabled by your *Logick* to prove what you please; there being no *Truth* so well establish'd, which may not (such is the weakness of our apprehensions) be very plausibly *contradicted*. And therefore, though we are not able to answer your *Arguments*; yet for our own parts we are much inclin'd to think, these *Ceremonies* are very dangerous and unlawful things; and that because we observe so many *Learned* and *Godly* Divines, who rather than they will defile them-

themſelves with ſuch Pollutions, have not only *ſuffered joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods* (in being depriv'd of all their livelyhoods) but alſo *Bonds* and *Impriſonments*, *Baniſhments* and a thouſand other Indignities, to which a *Perſecuted* People is uſually expos'd. And though at preſent (thanks to his *Majeſties* late gracious *Indulgence*) the times look more favourably upon them; yet they are ſtill ready and prepar'd, if *Authority* ſhall require it, to bear the ſame witneſs againſt theſe humane *Inventions*, by repeating their *Sufferings*; which certainly ſuch *prudent* Perſons would never do for a few *Ceremonies* (the cauſe of all this miſchief) were they ſuch innocent things, as the *Prelates*, and their *Agents* have endeavoured to perſwade us.

* I have formerly return'd a full, and I think *ſatisfactory Anſwer* (for it was never yet confuted) to this plauſible *Objection*; which I think ſeaſonable to repeat as followeth. * *Pref. to Toleration diſapproved, p. 4.*

Anſwer.

That which is ſaid in the firſt Place of their *Learning* and *Piety*, is not much to the purpoſe,

For *First*, such pretences, being very advantageous to any *Cause* whatsoever, are far more common then true. The † *Vulgar sort* (who are chiefly concerned in the *Objection*) are no competent *Judges* in these Cases, but much less in the former then the latter. But *Secondly*, granting them to be as *Learned* and *Pious*, as their admiring *Proselytes* can fancy, or my *Charity* could wish them; yet we must remember, that the most *Learned* and *Pious* are but *Men*, and therefore do but *know* in part, and are *sanctified* in part; and (as the learned * Bp. *Sanderson* expresseth it) *By the power of Godliness in their Hearts are no more secured from the possibility of falling into Error through Ignorance, then from the possibility of falling into Sin through Infirmity*; Which should therefore prompt us, as the safest course, to guide our *Actions*, not by *Example*, which (through different Circumstances) is various, and uncertain, but by *Precept* which is sure and fixt; not to have mens *Persons* in such *Admiration*, as to embrace their Opinions and Practises against the *Light* of *Scripture*, and *Right Reason*.

† *Sicest vulgus, ex veritate pauca, ex opinione multa æstimat.* Cic. Orat. 1.

* *Pref. before Serm Sect. 6.*

But *Thirdly*, if *Learning* and *Piety* must pass for *Arguments* (which yet they will not,

not, it being no good Conſequence, ſuch a *Learned* and *Pious* Man, or ſuch a learned and pious *Company* of Men holds this *Opinion*, therefore 'tis true yet) I ſay if theſe muſt be urg'd for *Logick* (though Compariſons are harſh, and for the moſt part odious) I think it might eaſily appear, without diſparagement be it ſpoken, That there are as Honeſt, Religious, Zealous good Men, that have willingly and chearfully *ſubmitted* to the *Church* of *England*, as the beſt of them all that have oppos'd the ſame.

Our Pious *Fore-fathers* (to whom under *God*, we owe the *purity* of our *Religion*, and *ſome* of which embrac'd a *Stake*) had more moderate apprehenſions, than the preſent *Generation*..

For, when the *Tyranny* of the *Church* of *Rome* had forc'd them to a *Separation* (and that in Obedience to *God*, who commands us neither to believe *Lies*, nor to commit *Sin*, neither of which they could avoid by continuing in *Communion* with her) though they left many of her *Ceremonies* (the number of them being great and burthenſome) yet they thought fit to retain ſome others of them, and that for *Order* aud *Decency* in the Service of God.

If it be replyed, as usually it is, That the *Reformation* (being carried on by those that were ὁμοιοπαθεῖς ἡμῖν made of the same *Clay*, and subject to the like *passions* with others) was at best but small and *imperfect*, it being beyond the *wit* and *power* of Man, either to foresee, or remove all Inconveniencies on a sudden, and therefore, that it was the Duty of *After-Ages*, to perfect and *complete* what they had so happily *begun*, by removing this *Rubbish* out of the House of God. To this I Answer,

That the *Topick* of Reformation, is beyond my *design*; onely this *by* the *by*. I wish that Protestants, of whatsoever Perswasion, would be more sparing in their *Reflections* upon our first *Reformers*; for besides the advantage that is hereby given to the *Romish* Party, we ought to consider; *That Abuses are easier complain'd of, than redress'd*; and possibly, had the Men of this *Age* been in their stead, and under the same *Circumstances*, I do much question (if we may take an estimate by their late Transactions) whether they would have brought the Work to so good an Issue, as through God's Blessing they then did. But no more of this.

'Tis

'Tis ſufficient for my preſent purpoſe; That ſince the cauſe of their *Separation* from *Rome*, was to avoid her Pollutions, 'tis evident; That theſe *Ceremonies* which they thought fit to retain, were, in their Judgment, no part of them, or any other way unlawful; the which, if my *diſſenting Brethren* will but grant, (not to talk now of their *inexpedience*, of which, neither they nor I muſt be Judges) as it is a fair ſtep to end our *Differences*, ſo it hence avoidably follows, That if ſome Pious Men have refus'd the *Ceremonies*, others of as great *Piety* have *conform'd* to them; if ſome *Learned* have diſputed, others as *Learned* have defended, which may for ever ſilence that Branch of the Objection, *viz.* The *Learning* and *Piety* of their Parties.

Nor is there much more *weight* in that other part of the *Objection*, (drawn from their *Perſecutions* and *Sufferings*) which comes now to be conſidered.

A *Pretence* indeed very *plauſible* and *popular*; for beſides its ſubtile Inſinuations upon a natural ſcore, (we being all obliged by that common bond of Humanity, to

to compassionate those that are in any misery and trouble, witness those usual resentments even for a Thief upon the Gallows) it hath this further advantage; That where-ever in *Scripture* the word *Persecution* is mentioned, and that either with some *Promise* annex'd for the support of *God's People* (who otherwise might despond under such gloomy dispensations) or of some *Judgment* denounced, to restrain the fury of their *Persecutors*: I say, wheresoever such *passages* occur (as they do frequently in *Holy Writ*) they have learned the Art (by imposing upon a Credulous *Vulgar*) to make the World believe, that *they* are those *persecuted Saints*, for whom those *Promises* are recorded, and that all such persons as are any way employed (though in Obedience to Authority) to suppress them, are *Persecuting Wretches*, on whom, sooner or later, all those *Judgments* threatned shall certainly be *inflicted*.

I shall not in the least offend them with any harsh Invectives (such Reflections, though some ease indeed to a burthened mind, being very little to the *Substance* of a Cause) but shall only beg their Patience and

and Charity, whilst I endeavour to undeceive them, by assuring them in plain *English* (what without Repentance, they will one day find true) *That they are not Persecuted as Saints, but punished as Malefactors.*

And this I shall (though God's assistance) undeniably *prove* in this Method.

1. By fixing the *Notion* in laying down a clear and distinct *definition* of *Persecution.*

2. By considering, how far those present *Sufferings*, to which our *Nonconformists* are obnoxious, do agree with it, or differ from it.

Persecution for Religion (for of such only I now treat) may not unfitly be thus described.

'Tis an eager violent inflicting, of outward temporal Evils, for the exercise of true Religion.

I call it *eager violent inflicting*] so the Lat. * *Persequor*, and the Gr. † Διώκω do fully denote; they both signifie so to *follow*, as

i. e. continuè seu continuato mortu sequor, inimico affectu insequor, continuo, assidue quæro. Mart. Lex. Philolog. † i. e. καταλαμβάνειν φευγοντα, ἢ κατατρέχειν ἐν κλίμακι, καὶ φεύγειν μεθ' ὁρμῆς. Hesychius.

a Hunter doth his Prey, who pursues it till he takes it.

But because these terms *eager* and *violent*, do only agree to one sort of *Persecution*, *viz.* that which is *furious* and *raging*, (it being sometimes more mild and moderate) and since *definitions* do express the *nature*, but not the *degree* of the *thing defined* (as when we define *Calor*, we take no notice of it in *summo*) I shall therefore omit these words *eager* and *violent*, and then the *Definition* (I suppose unquestionably) stands thus:

Persecution is an inflicting of outward temporal Evils, for the exercise of true Religion.

Outward temporal Evils] either upon the *Body*, as Banishment, Imprisonment, Tortures, Death; or upon the *Estate*, as Pecuniary Mulcts, Confiscation of Goods; or upon *Reputation* and *Good Name*, as Slanderings, Revilings, Reproachful Speeches.

For the exercise of true Religion] which is the *Ratio formalis*, the constitutive difference, whereby *Persecution* is distinguished from all other violences whatsoever. For let

let the greateſt *Reproaches* and *Indignities*, uſher in the moſt exquiſite *Tortures*, and thoſe be concluded by a *Death* as cruel, as the utmoſt Malice on Earth, or Fury in Hell can contrive; yet unleſs theſe Tortures be *eo nomine* inflicted, for the ſake and cauſe of *Religion*, we may call them mercileſs, inhumane, unatural *Cruelties*, (or any ſuch like name as can moſt fitly expreſs them) but not *Perſecution*.

By Religion, (that I may yet more fully explain the *Definition*) I mean the *Worſhip* of God; by *true Religion*, the worſhipping of him according to his Will; the which Will (though heretofore variouſly delivered, and in different Diſpenſations, yet thoſe extraordinary wayes of Conveyance being now ceaſed) it hath pleaſed the Goodneſs and Wiſdom of *God* to deliver in Writing (by the Miniſtry of the *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*) in thoſe *Books* which, by way of eminency, we call the *Scriptures*. So that whatever *Worſhip* is not according to theſe *holy Oracles*, is not *true* and acceptable, but *falſe* and vain: *In vain do ye worſhip me*, &c. It being an undoubted Truth; That God hath as much right to appoint the way of his own Worſhip, as to be worſhipped.

There

There are moreover, we know, *two* parts of Religion; *Credenda*, *Agenda*, *Truths* to be believed, and *Duties* to be performed, in order to *Salvation*; and in both these, the Scripture is our Rule and Direction.

He therefore that is *punished*, either for *believing* those *Truths*, or for *doing* those *Duties*, the belief and performance of which *holy Scripture* requireth of him; or he that is *punished*, for *not believing* those things as Truths, which are but falsities and *lies*, or for *not doing* those things as Duties, that are sinful and *unlawful*, he, I say, who is punished upon these accounts, is properly *persecuted*.

The *Case* then about *Persecution*, as it respects the *Nonconformists*, is briefly this:

If those *Instances*, for which they are punished, be no way required of them in *holy Scripture*, either for belief, or practice; and if it shall appear, upon enquiry, that the *Church* of *England* requires nothing of them, that is *in fide* erroneous, or *in facto* impious; if she neither enjoyns them to believe *Lies*, nor to commit any *Sin*; if nor so, nor so, let the World then *judge* where

where the *fault lies*; and who they are, that, without Repentance, must one day *Answer* (which I fear is now little thought on) for all those *Separations* and *Divisions* in the *Church*, all those *Distractions*, *Confusions*, *Wars*, *Murders*, *Rapines*, *&c.* (the natural Consequents of the former) in the *State*, which these poor miserable divided Kingdoms have so sadly experienc'd.

'Twill be replyed, (and I find it no unusual Plea) That *Preaching and Praying are necessary Duties*; *But they are punished for Preaching and Praying*; *Therefore they are punished for performance of Religious Duties, and consequently (according to the now mentioned definition) are persecuted.*

They tell us, * *There are certain inoffensive persons, and they* (meaning their Rulers) *have really no more against them, only that they meet, and pray and preach together. Innocent folks, who are dragged to Prison for doing nothing in earnest, but endeavouring to save their Souls.*

* *Prop. for Safety of King and Kingdom* p. 10.

That I may, if possible, convince *my Brethren* of the weakness and vanity of this *plausible Argument*; I'le give them my *Answer*

swer (I hope methodically and clearly) in these following Conclusions.

Concl. 1.

By Preaching *and* Praying *(as they are the Subject of our present Disquisition) is meant the performance of them in publick, not in private*; this latter being *liberæ observationis*, since every man (of what persuasion soever) may not only *pray* w th his own Family, *when* and *how* he pleaseth, but also *preach* or instruct them (and that without fear of *punishment*) in what manner he thinks fit.

Concl. 2.

In Preaching and Praying there is considerable, Substantia & Circumstantiæ, Res & Modus; the substance of the Duty, or the thing to be perform'd, and the Circumstances, or manner of its performance.

Preaching and Praying, quoad substantiam, are necessary; necessitate Præcepti & Medii, i. e. *God hath Commanded*, and the condition of the Church (whilst Militant *& in viâ*) doth require, that these Duties be attended.

Not

Nor is the *Subſtance* only, but alſo the *Circumſtances* of theſe Duties in *Theſi*, and in the general *neceſſary*, *i.e.* when theſe Duties are conſidered in *actu exercito*, whenever they are put into *practice*, we muſt *neceſſarily* make uſe of Circumſtances, ſome or other.

Concl. 3.

Theſe Circumſtances (however in Theſi neceſſary) in Hypotheſi and in Particular, are not determined in Scripture; (which, I do not mean as to their Lawfulneſs, but as to their being Duties) if they be, there muſt then be produc'd ſome clear and diſtinct *Precept*, perpetually obligatory to the *Church*, requiring our obſervance of ſuch or ſuch Circumſtances; for this, and nothing elſe, though other things are pretended) can conſtitute a Religious Duty. Thus; though *Prayer* be a Duty, yet whether it be a *Set Form*, or *Extemporary*? The *Miniſter*, whether habited in a *Surplice*, or *without*? His *Geſture*, whether kneeling, or ſtanding? The *Place*, whether in a Desk, or at the Communion Table, or at both? So for *Preaching*, whether in a Gown, a long Cloak or a ſhort? How

many Sermons in one day, whether *three* or *two*, or but *one*; I say, none of these, or such like, are determined in *Scripture* to be our Duties; those who assert they are, must produce the *Command* making them to be such; for *Duty* and *Command*, have a necessary Respect and Relation to one another.

Concl. 4.

These Circumstances (though still free and indifferent quoad naturam, *being neither commanded nor forbidden yet) must not be left undetermined* quoad usum; *i. e.* Private persons must not be left at liberty, to do what they think fit in *Circumstantials*, as if an Agreement in *Substantials onely* were sufficient; so as if there be but *Preaching* and *Praying*; if these Duties be but performed, one man may use a *Set-Form*, another may pray *extempore*; this *Minister* may wear the *Surplice*, whilest his *Neighbour* rejects it as Popish and *Anti-christian*. Does not any man (who hath not enslaved his *Reason* to support a *Faction*) very easily observe, that the bare mention of this Fancy, such I am forced to call it, is its own Confutation? was it ever so much as *thought* on, but in the heat of a Dispute?

Diſpute? Did ever any *Conſtituted Church* in the World allow ſuch Liberty? Are not my *Brethren* themſelves convinc'd of the contrary? If they deny it, I could very eaſily refreſh their Memories in ſo obvious a Theam; I could turn them to their *Directory*, and their *Ordinances* to enforce it, *&c.* but I ſpare them. In ſhort,

* *There is ſcarce any difference ſo ſmall and inconſiderable, but the divulging and propagating of it, may prove dangerous and pernicious, and in the event intolerable:* Therefore to allow *private* perſons the Liberty, to order theſe Circumſtances in the *publick* Worſhip (*pro modulo Conſcientiæ*) as their own Conſcience (perhaps humour or intereſt) ſhall *dictate*, is the ready way to deſtroy all *Order* and *Government* in the World.

* *Mr.* Newcomes *Serm. at* Pauls, *Feb.* 8. 1646. p. 18.

Well then, to riſe yet a little higher.

Since it is neceſſary that there muſt be ſome *Circumſtances* made uſe of in the exerciſe of theſe Duties, *Preaching* and *Praying*, (it being impoſſible to perform any Action, and therefore Religious Action, without them) and ſince Scripture hath *determined* nothing, either by requiring ſome as *neceſſary*, or forbidding others

as *unlawful:* and since to leave them undetermin'd (for private Persons to do what seems good in their own eyes) is apparently destructive both to *Church* and *State*; What can more naturally follow than this; That they must be determined by the *Supream Magistrate*; who by the Advice of his *Ecclesiastical* Council, his *Convocation*, (as in Seculars by his *Parliament*) may appoint the performance of these, and other Religious Duties in such a *manner*, as is most agreable to that Apostolical Canon: *Let all things be done decently and in order.*

I proceed therefore to my fifth Conclusion, which is this:

Concl. 5.

The Supream Magistrate must determine what Circumstances shall be used in the Worship and Service of God. The which Conclusion, I shall rather suppose than prove; not that I think it of less truth or certainty than the rest, but because our Divines, not only *Episcopal*, but also the *dissenting Parties* (with whom I am now treating) have perform'd it with so much plainness and satisfaction to my hand.

And

And though I might collect whole *Volumns* from their Sermons, and other Treatiſes to confirm this Truth, yet to relieve my ſelf from the drugery of tranſcribing, (which is no pleaſing task) and to give eaſe to my *Reader*, I ſhall only refer him to ſome Places in the *Collections* of a Book call'd *Tolleration Diſapprov'd*, &c. which if he pleaſe to turn to, and read (as they are cited in the * Margin) he will do me great *right*, and himſelf no diſpleaſure.

* See the pages following, viz. p. 18, 19, 20, 21; 28, 29; 35, 36, 37, 38, 39; 50.

From which Places it evidently appears, *That the Magiſtrate is both* Cuſtos *and* Vindex utriuſq; Tabulæ. *That the Examples of the Kings of Iſrael and Judah, may ſufficiently warrant and encourage all Religious Magiſtrates, to reform and ſettle Religion in one Uniform way, and take care that all under the Government, ſhould all ſerve the Lord with one ſhoulder, this being not a Tyranny over men, but the* Priviledge *of the Goſpel. That they muſt take a courſe, that Chriſtians may live a quiet and* Peaceable *life in Godlineſs and honeſty, not in Strife and Contention*; which how they ſhall be able to perform, if *every man* (concerning theſe Circumſtances) *may hold what he pleaſe, and Publiſh and* Preach *what he holds*, I am

not able to imagine. These and many the like Passages (some of which I have now given you in their own words) you will find in the forecited places; from whence I think it is plain, † *That where the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church doth not, or cannot prevail, the Magistrate must interpose his Coercive Power, for restraint or Remedy.* Which leads me to the sixth Concl.

† *Vt supra*, p. 20.

Concl. 6.

There must be Eccl. Laws, Canons, or Constitutions made, for the due ordering of these Circumstances.

Much I grant hath been objected by my *dissenting Brethren* against these *Constitutions*, both in *Thesi*, against all Eccl. Laws in *general*, and in *Hypothesi*, against these of our own *Church* in *particular*.

As to the *first* (for the latter is beyond my design) I think it would puzzle the most judicious *Dissenter*, to give a solid satisfactory Account, why the *Supream Power* may make Laws to determine *Indifferent* Circumstances in *Temporals*, and not in *Spirituals*; they being both liable (in

(in my apprehenſion) to the ſame *Difficulties* and *Inconveniences*, and if the latter be *exploded*, the former (ſuppoſing they are faithful to their Principles) will very hardly be *defended*.

Concl. 7.

Theſe Eccl. Laws when rightly made and conſtituted, are obligatory, and muſt be obey'd. The Reaſon is, Becauſe Obedience to lawful Authority *in licitis & honeſtis*, is a duty, which God in his holy Word requireth of us. Now *that* is lawful, and conſequently the *debita materia* of any humane Conſtitution, Eccleſiaſtical or Civil, which is not contrary to any former obligation. Unleſs therefore the *matter* of theſe *Conſtitutions*, or the *thing* which they require us to perform, can be evinc'd (by good Logical Deduction) to be contrary to God's Will Revealed in Scripture, there remains nothing but *Obedience*, not only *Paſſive*, chearfully and quietly (without murmurings and revilings) ſubmitting to the *Puniſhment*; but alſo *Active* by a ready performance of the thing commanded; though poſſibly it might be thought very inconvenient, as being contrary to *Education, Cuſtom*,

ſtome, Intereſt and Advantage in the World, and the like. And therefore,

Concl. 8.

We being not (even the beſt of us all) over-ready in this great Duty of Obedience, There are Penalties *annexed to theſe* Eccl. Conſt. *(as well as to other Laws) to frighten us into our Duty.* Such is the *corruption* and *ſtul-bornneſs* of our *natures,* and ſo little are we affected with the Obligations of Conſcience, that it is morally impoſſible for the moſt wholeſome Laws to obtain their End, without the Addition of Civil *Sanctions* to enforce them. For, if the Laws of *God,* which are holy, juſt and good, and every way perfect (they being the contrivance of infinite *Wiſdome* and *Goodneſs*) if theſe are contemned and neglected, and (and as ſad experience proves it) dayly caſt behind our backs, when the obſervance of them is inconſiſtent with ſome Bruitiſh Pleaſure; no wonder if the Laws of *Men,* (who not only, many times, want *Wiſdom* to contrive, but alſo Goodneſs to deſign what is moſt profitable for their People) I ſay, no wonder if theſe be rather quarrel'd with and diſputed, than ſubmitted to and obey'd.

As

As therefore the infinite *Majeſty* of Heaven, hath enforced the obſervance of his *Commands*, by a ſuitable propoſal of *Rewards* and *Puniſhments*; ſo it is the Duty of Inferior *Legiſlators*, to be *a Puniſhment to evil doers, and a praiſe to them that do well.* Therefore,

Concl. 9.

The Supream Magiſtrate, in inflicting theſe Penalties, i.e. *in puniſhing the Offenders againſt his Conſtitutions, doth execute Juſtice, and perform his Duty.*

The end and deſign of Government, is *Salus Publica*, it is to take care, *ne quid detrimenti capiat Communitas*, or in the Apoſtle's phraſe, *That we may live a quiet and peaceable life, in all Godlineſs and Honeſty.* This is the End.

And ſince no End can be attained, but by a due and effectual Application of proper *Means*, we cannot but in Reaſon grant, that the Magiſtrate may employ ſuch *Medium's* as are moſt conducive to his deſired *End*. Amongſt which, *this* certainly is not the leaſt conſiderable, (and without which, all

all Government is but precarious) *iz. A removal of whatsoever is hurtful and destructive to his Society.*

Now since the publick *allowance*, of different Opinions, and Practices about Circumstantials in *Religion* (particularly about Preaching and Praying) doth naturally improve into contentious *Disputes*, and those Disputes, if not restrain'd, break out into *Civil Wars*; for * *Men will at last take up Swords and Spears instead of Pens; and defend by Armes what they cannot do by Arguments.* Since things are thus, 'Tis at least Prudence, if not Duty, in the Supream Power, to remove the Occasion of this *Ruine*, by enjoyning the Publick Practice of these Duties in one *Uniform* way; That all his Subjects *may speak the same thing*; and *that there be no Divisions among st them, perfectly joyn'd together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.*

* *Mr.* Newcomen's *Ser. before Par.* Sept. 12. 1644. p. 36.

If therefore upon inquiry it do appear; That the *Magistrate* hath Power to make *Constitutions*, for the better ordering of those *Circumstances*, about which Scripture hath determind nothing, whether we must use or not use them; and if *Offenders* against

againſt theſe *Conſtitutions* are juſtly puniſhable, it undenyably follows; that in puniſhing ſuch Violaters of his Laws, the Magiſtrate doth not *Perſecute*, but *execute Juſtice*, and that thoſe Perſons who are thus reflected upon, are not *Perſecuted as Saints*, but *Puniſh'd as Malafactors*. The very Caſe of our *Nonconformiſts* here in *England*.

The *Summary* of theſe *Concluſions* (that my Reader may the better apprehend them to be both *Conſequent* and *Evident*) is this.

Preaching and Praying are neceſſary Duties, Which cannot be performd without Circumſtances; Theſe are not determin'd in Scripture, Nor muſt be left undetermin'd, Therefore by the Supream Magiſtrate, Who to effect this makes Laws and Conſtitutions; Theſe have penalties annexed to be inflicted on the Diſobedient, The infliction of theſe Penalties is the execution of Juſtice, and the Magiſtrates Duty, But no Perſecution; Therefore *thoſe Perſons that ſuffer theſe Penalties are not injuriouſly Perſecuted, but juſtly puniſh'd.*

Quod erat Demonſtrandum.

I cannot at all doubt, but the weakneſs of

of my Brethrens *Argument* (to any unprejudic'd Reader) begins now to appear. However, I will repeat their Syllogisme once more, and then let the World judge who is in the *Right*.

Preaching and Praying are necessary Duties.
But N. C. are punish'd for Preaching and Praying.
Therefore *They are punish'd for necessary Duties,*
and consequently are persecuted.

I Answer First, by distinguishing the *Major*,

Preaching and Praying *quoad Substantiam*, are necessary Duties, *i. e.* Its necessary that these Duties be perform'd. *Quoad Circumstantias*, they are not necessary, *i. e.* though these Duties be perform'd, yet it is not necessary to perform them in *such* or *such* a *manner*. Thus though *Prayer* be necessary, yet that it should be *Extemporary*, or without a *Form*, is not necessary; or that the Minister should be without a *Surplice*, is not necessary.

So for *Preaching*, though it be a Duty, yet

yet to *preach* or *hear* a Sermon in a *Conventicle* of two or three *Thouſand*, or to expoſe my ſelf to *Sufferings*, and perhaps, a long Impriſonment, to the neglect of my *Profeſſion*, and thence the ruine of my Family, for which I am bound to provide. I ſay, to throw my ſelf upon all theſe inconveniencies, only to hear a Sermon from *A. B.* or *C. D.* when I may ſafely hear a much better from an Orthodox Miniſter, is ſo far from being neceſſary, that it may juſtly be ſaid, *Who hath required theſe things at your hands?*

Secondly, I Anſwer, by denying the *Minor*; which is utterly falſe and untrue. They are not puniſhed for *Preaching* and *Praying* (they being puniſhable for their neglect) but they are puniſhed for not obſerving thoſe *Circumſtances* about *Preaching* and *Praying*, which *Authority* requireth of them; or they are puniſhed for not performing theſe *Duties* in ſuch a manner as their *Governors* require; or more plainly yet, they are puniſhed for not obſerving, and ſubmitting to thoſe *Conſtitutions*, which their *Governours* have Eſtabliſhed, for the better ordering of theſe *Duties*. The *Obligation* of which *Conſtitutions* (becauſe they

becauſe they are much oppos'd) I'le endeavour to *confirm* by this one Conſideration. *Bonum non oritur niſi ex integra Cauſa*, There muſt be a concurrance of all requiſite Conditions to make a thing good. Now the Conditions required to the *Validity* of a Law, are not unduly expreſt by the four *Cauſes*; *Efficient*, *Material*, *Formal*, *Final*; and, *That* Law which is not Defective in any one of theſe, is *Valid* and *Obligatory*, But ſuch are the *Conſtitutions* of the Church of *England*. Therefore, &c.

1. *Reſpectu Cauſæ Efficientis*, there is ſufficient Authority and Legiſlative Power. 2. *Reſpectu Materiæ*, the things enjoyn'd are not unlawful, as being contrary to any Law, any formal Obligation. 3. *Reſpectu Formæ*, there is ſufficient Promulgation. 4. *Reſpectu Finis*, Publick Peace and Safety, (by reſtraining Diſorders, Tumults, Contentions, which might ariſe from Difformity in Worſhip) is the very Reaſon and End of their being enacted.

Object.

But is not Conſcience *violated, and* Chriſtian Liberty *infringed by theſe* Eccleſiaſtical Con-

ſtitutions, *ſince they determine us preciſely* ad unum *in the uſe of indifferent things, which God and Chriſt have left free* ad utrumlibet?

Anſw. I Anſwer, (referring my Reader for farther Satisfaction to Biſhop *Sanderſons* ſeventh Sermon ad Pop, pag. 384.) That there is no *Subject* of *England* (whatever is pretended to the contrary) but hath the *Liberty* of his *Conſcience*; or, (to ſpeak more intelligibly) may worſhip God according to his *Conſcience*, *i. e.* in ſuch a way and manner as his *Conſcience* (his judging Faculty) judgeth moſt acceptable; provided alwayes, that he keep his Opinions to *himſelf*, or to his *Family*, and make them a Rule only for his own private *Practice*: But if ſuch a Man will go *publiſh* his *Opinions*, and entangle the Conſciences of *others*, and ſeek to draw Diſciples after him, and make a Party, and cauſe *Diviſions* and *Diſſentions* amongſt his Majeſties Subjects, and trouble the *Publick*, he is to be reſtrain'd, he is not to be tolerated.

Object. * *Will you allow the Magiſtrate to Tyranize over mens Conſciences?*

* *Mr.* Calamy's *Ser. before the Lords*, Decemb. 25. 1644. P. 38.

Anſw.

Answ. 'By no means; But I believe it 'is the Duty of Magistrates to keep men 'from infecting their Subjects with Soul-'destroying Errors, If thou hast an Here-'tical Opinion, have it to thy self, and the 'Magistrate will not, nay, cannot meddle 'with thy private Conscience. But if thou 'labourest to infect others, with thy Grace-'destroying Opinions, I doubt not but the 'Magistrate is bound to keep thee from 'spreading thy Infection to the undoing 'of the Souls of his Subjects. If he may 'lawfully shut up a man that hath the 'Plague upon his body, that he may not 'infect others; Why not a man that hath 'the Plague of Heresie upon his Soul, that 'so he may not destroy the Souls of Thou-'sands? Shall a Master in a Family have 'power to put away a Servant that is 'tainted with a gross Opinion, and yet not 'be called a Tyrant over that Servants 'Conscience? And shall not the chief Ma-'gistrate of a Kingdom have Power to put 'out of his Kingdom (at least to shut up 'from doing hurt) one that is his Subject, 'and polluted with Blasphemous, Hereti-'cal Idololatrical Opinions? Is not the 'Kingdom the Magistarates House and Fa-'mily?

'These

'These are the means that are to be 'uſed to cure the diſtractions of *England*. 'The Lord give us grace to put them in 'practice.

But this and the other *Party* will reply; That *they* are neither *Heretical* nor *Turbulent*; and therefore what is all this diſcourſe to *them*?

I *Anſwer*; No man muſt be Judge in his own Cauſe; every man therefore is to be ſuppoſed ſuch, that (when his place requires it) refuſeth (by publick *Oaths*, *Subſcriptions*, and *Declarations*) to give the Magiſtrate aſſurance that he is *Orthodox* and *Peaceable*.

*'Poſſibly they will all ſay, They are 'of the ſame Opinion with the Reformed 'Churches in Fundamentals as well as we, 'and their differences are but in *minutioribus*. Now ſuppoſing this to be true (as it 'may be in ſome of them) why do they then 'tranſgreſs the Apoſtle's Rule? why do 'they not, if it be in matters of leſſer mo- 'ment wherein they differ from us, why do 'not they keep their Opinions private, and 'have their Faith unto themſelves before

*Mr. *Newcomen*; *Serm. at* Pauls, *Feb.* 8. 1646, *p.* 40.

'God? why do they upon so small Differences (if the Differences be so small) withdraw from Communion with us, and the rest of the Churches, and gather themselves into distinct and separate Churches?

*Ut supra p. 21.

*Had all that Profess the Gospel in *England*, made Conscience to be of the same mind, and the same Judgment with their Brethren, and the rest of the Churches of Christ, as far as possibly; and where they cannot, where there is a necessity of differing, had they made Conscience to keep their Differences from appearing in Publick; to have their private Opinions and Faith to themselves, and not intangle the weak with their doubtful Disputations; forbearing to judge or despise those that are not of their Opinion, loving them still as Brethren, not censuring them as Prophane, Anti-christian, Fighters against God, men that will wilfully shut their eyes against the Light; had these things (I say) been attended to on all hands, our Breaches had never been so great as now they are, nor should the lovers of Truth and Peace have had so much cause to lament them.

'But,

'But, † O the deceitfulneſs of the heart 'of man! Little do many real Separiſts, 'who cry againſt the ſpirit of Perſecution, 'ſuſpect that the ſame ſpirit is in them! 'whence is Perſecution, but from thinking 'ill of others, and abhorring them, or not 'loving them. And do not you do ſo by 'thoſe whom you cauſeleſly ſeparate from? † Mr. Baxters Cure of Church divisions, pag. 254.

'* Who are they that brand their Bre- 'thren with the Title *Proud, Time-ſervers, 'Prelatical, Tyrannical, Antichriſtian?* And 'what is this leſs than Perſecution? * Mr. Newcomen ut ſupra p. 40

'† *Therefore thou art inexcuſable, O man, 'whoſoever thou art that judgeſt: for in that 'thou judgeſt another, thou condemneſt thy 'ſelf, for thou that judgeſt doſt the ſame things.* † Rom. 2. 1.

'* *And why beholdeſt thou the Mote that is 'in thy Brothers eye, but conſidereſt not the 'Beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt 'thou ſay to thy Brother, Let me pull out the 'Mote out of thine eye; and behold, a Beam is 'in thine own eye? Thou Hypocrite, firſt caſt 'out the Beam out of thine own eye, and then 'ſhalt thou ſee clearly to caſt out the Mote out 'of thy Brothers eye.* † Nat. 7. 3, 4, 5.

I have a fair occaſion (could I allow my ſelf the liberty of its improvement) to return my Brethrens Argument upon their

own heads, by assuring them (and I beseech God to give them grace to consider and bewail it) that the *Persecution*, so much complained of, lyes at their own Doors, they being not innocent *Sufferers*, but injurious *Aggressors*.

These I know are very harsh and unpleasing words; but the Truth of them will appear, when we shall have remembred, that there are more *sorts* of Persecution than *one*: of which St. *Augustine* thus informs. *Gravius persequitur Filius Patrem male vivendo, quam Pater Filium castigando. Et gravius ancilla Saram persecuta est per iniquam Superbiam, quam eam Sara per debitam Disciplinam. Et gravius Dominum persequebantur propter quos dictum est, zelus domus tuæ comedit me, quam eos ipse cum eorum mensas evertit, & eos flagello de Templo expulit.* There is, you see, *Persecution* of the *Tongue*, and of an *irregular Life*, as well as of the *Hand*; and if my *Brethren* are not at present guilty of this latter (whether through restraint, or their own good nature I shall not determine) I am sure the former is their constant Practice.

*Lib. de Unit Eccles. contr. Petil Epist. c. 17.

For, to insist only upon that, 'tis even amazing to mention, what bitter *Taunts*, rude *Sarcasms*, unmannerly *Jeers*, fabulous *Stories*,

ries, ſcandalous *Reproaches*, are their daily exerciſe; whereby they vex the *Righteous Souls*, weaken the *Hands*, diſcourage the *Endeavours* of their honeſt Orthodox Conforming *Brethren*; Are not all *Places*, all *Companies*, all *Occaſions* ſufficient Witneſſes of this Truth?

Really 'tis very ſad, (and to be lamented with *Tears*) That the great Work of *Religion*, the *Preaching of the Goſpel*, and the *Salvation of Souls*, ſhould be thus obſtructed by theſe unfortunate practices.

But I hope no faithful Son of the *Church* will be *diſcouraged* at theſe things, or in the leaſt neglect his *Duty*, though all the World ſhould be offended at him. The Rule is fixt; *We muſt obey God rather than Man.* 'Tis our dear Lord's caſe, in whom there was no Sin, neither was Guile found in his mouth, and yet he was accuſed for a *Wine-bibber*, a *Glutton*, and that he had a *Devil*. *Math.* 10. 24, &c. *The* * *Diſciple is not above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord. It is enough for the Diſciple that he be as his Maſter, and the Servant as his Lord. If they have called the Maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more ſhall they call them of his houſhold? Fear them*

not therefore: Fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell.

I hope what I have now said will give full satisfaction to all such as have not by some partial *affection* or other, rendred themselves uncapable to receive it. If men will shut their *eyes*, who can help it though they see not the *Sun*. If men list to be contentious, and will not be satisfied; there's no remedy. If they will suffer themselves to be carried away with such an *high estimation* of some *men*, as to subject themselves wholly to their *Judgments* or *Wills*, without ever questioning *the truth* of any thing they *teach*, or the *lawfulness* of any thing they *enjoyn*; what can be writ so plain as to convince them?

If it shall yet further be replied, That certainly however they are accus'd, there is nothing else but *Conscience*, and *a just sense of their Duty*, that could support these poor men under these pressures and troubles; I must then take the boldness to remind them (and I would not uncharitably censure, either them or any body else.

God

God of his great mercy forgive me, if I judge amiſs) that I am afraid, beſides *Conſcience* and *ſenſe of Duty*, they may have other Motives (which they are not willing to own publickly) why they do not *conform*.

When I have firſt told them; I ſhall meet them at the Day of Judgment, I can then with greater confidence aſſure the World (what ſome mens prejudice will not ſuffer them to conſider) That the chief Reaſons why ſo many *Non-conformiſts* refuſe *Subſcription* are theſe *two*: Their *Credit* and their *Intereſt*; ſpringing from thoſe Roots of bitterneſs, *Pride* and *Covetouſneſs*.

Firſt, Their *Credit* and *Reputation*; Wherein I am fully inſtructed by a *learned Perſon**: Who having propoſed this doubt; Why did many of them deliberate ſo long whether they ſhould accept of Dignities in the Church? he thus adds:

'If it was ſo plain a buſineſs, that their 'Conſcience and their *Covenant* would not 'let them *conform*, one would think they 'ſhould have profeſt it openly without any 'more ado. And therefore I conclude, that 'Pauſe and Deliberation was about ſome-'thing elſe; not about matters of *Conſci-*

* *Friendly Debate between* C. *and* N. C. *firſt part.* P. 113. *Edit* 2d.

'*ence*, but of *Interest* and *Policy*. As, Whether the People would take it well, and 'not laugh at them, as so many Magpies 'got upon a Perch? Whether it would not 'be a scandalous thing, that is, not for 'their *Credit* and *Reputation*? Whether 'they could not hold such a Party with 'them in *Nonconformity* as would ballance 'the *Episcopal*, and so force them at least to 'a *Toleration*. In short, whether they should 'not lose the Affections of their own Party, which they had already made; and 'win very little upon the Affections of o-'thers, whom they had so much disobliged 'in the late Troubles. These were their 'secret Debates in their Cabals; the 'weighty Points that were to be stated in 'those Consultations. You, Good man, 'think perhaps that they spent their time 'in *Fasting*, and *seeking God* to direct their 'Consciences. No, no; it was not their '*Conscience*, but their *Credit*, which then 'lay at Stake — Because I have heard 'some of them acknowledg, they did not 'scruple what we do, but thought it un-'handsom for *them* to do it. Sometimes 'they put it in a more Religious Phrase, 'and said; It would give a great *Scandal* 'to the World, who would think the worse

of

'of the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. But the 'meaning was in plain *Engliſh*, that they 'were aſhamed to confeſs their Error, and 'to ſet up thoſe things again which they 'had raſhly pulled down. —Beſides; there 'can no account be given of their Beha-'viour ſince, in cheriſhing this Fancy a-'mong you (or ſuffering it to grow) that '*Conformity is unlawful*, unleſs it be this; 'That they think it will make more for 'their Reputation among you, if you be-'lieve it was *Conſcience*, not care of their 'own *Credit* and *Eſtimation*, that kept 'them from *conforming*.

If this excellent *Author* ſhall be con-demned as *Apocryphal* (and it is a very eaſy Confutation to cry, *Fie upon him*, when they are not able to anſwer his *Arguments*) I ſhall then give them an Authority, for-merly little leſs than *Canonical*. How the Caſe ſtands with him at preſent I am whol-ly ignorant. However he is one that full well underſtands the Intrigues of his Par-ty; and therefore I do with the greater confidence repeat his words.

'* It is ſinful *pride*, and tenderneſs of 'their own Honour, which maketh ſome 'men avoid their Duty, and wrathfully grudge

Baxters Defence of the Principles of Love. p. 92.

'grudge at them that speak for it, because 'those that are against them, thence take 'occasion to insult over them, or reproach 'them. If men do but say, *You are now 'Turncoats*, and *Time-servers*, & *where is your 'Reformation now?* and *you are now glad to 'do as we do*; they think this Reason enough 'why they should forbear that *Communion* 'and *Worship* which is their *Duty*. Are 'these beseeming self-denying humble persons? Could they suffer Death for their 'Duty-sake, that cannot bear a little Reproach for it?

'Object. *If we knew it were our Duty we 'would suffer for it.* *Answ.* But is it not 'this very suffering and reproach, and insulting of others, which maketh you 'think it is *not your Duty*? And so carnal 'Persons use to do. They will believe nothing to be their Duty which they must 'suffer by. Let Gods honor be all to you; 'and your own be nothing, and you will 'not much stick at such things as these.

Ex ore tuo —— This is witness beyond exception; which is so close and well urg'd, I am very happily prevented from any further enlargement.

A

A *Second Reaſon* why they do not Conform, is their *Intereſt*.

If this ſhall be thought a Paradox (it being a ſtrange method to conſult their *Intereſt* by loſing their *Livings*) the diſſatisfy'd Perſon is then deſir'd to conſider; That the *Ringleaders* of the *Faction* (whoſe example their Infantry was obliged to follow) having poſſeſs'd themſelves of other mens Preferments; and foreſeeing (as in all equity they ought) that they ſhould be reſtored to the right owners; they thence made a vertue of neceſſity; by aſſuring their *Proſelites* (becauſe they knew not how to play a fairer Game) that they were reſolv'd to ſtick to them; and that as they had defended the *Cauſe* with their Tongues and Pens (I ſpeak their own Language) they were now ready, if Providence ſhould call them to it, even to ſeal it with their Blood.

By ſuch confident *cant* as this, their *People*, who had been ſufficiently predispos'd, were eaſily melted into ſuch kindneſs, as gave great encouragement to their *Preachers* to conjecture, that they ſhould be

be no losers by their Silence. As indeed they are not; for,

First, many of them gain more at present from their *Party*, than they could from the *Church* if they *conform'd*.

Secondly; they retain a Power and Interest in their *Party* to prefer their conforming Sons. For seeing none but *Conformers* can be prefer'd; they will be much more willing to prefer Sons of *Nonconformists* (whom they may have Reason to believe, to conform *outwardly* rather than *ex animo*; rather to get an *Estate*, than that they love or will really endeavour the preservation of the Government) than those who are *ex animo*, and truly conformable out of *Conscience*. And this is such a piece of Impiety, as (were there not too much ground for the suspicion) I should not think any Christian could be guilty of. For this is evidently (for base secular ends and interest) to humour and please the seduced People, as such, even in their *Errors*; and so to displease and disobey their Prince, and their God too, in disobeying the just Laws and Commands of their Superiors whom God hath set over them.

And

And now, if they will allow us the liberty to complain, Is it not a ſad thing, that *Religion* ſhould *lie at the top*, where *Avarice* and *Ambition* lie at the bottom? Is it not enough for theſe men to dote upon their own *wild Fancies*, by ſetting up a new Model of Government and Diſcipline, never heard of till the laſt *by-gon Century?* Is it not enough, that for the better eſtabliſhing this Brat of their own Brain they have involved *three Kingdoms* in Confuſion and Blood; (For thus they tell me, † *The exceſſive Dominion of the Hierarchy, with the rigorous Impoſition of humane Ceremonies, was accounted much of the Malady of former times, which ended in thoſe deadly Convulſions of Church and State.* * *The firſt impoſing of the ſtrict uſe of theſe Forms was the very thing that diſquieted theſe Nations, (taking in the concomitant Ceremonies and Subſcription.)*

† *Intereſt of Engl. in the matter of Religion*, p. 403.

* *Account of Proceedings, &c.* p. 7.

Is not this, and ſomething more that might be mentioned, enough? but muſt they needs draw in God, and make him a Party in the buſineſs as if the *cauſe* were *his*, as if in all they had ſaid or done, they had ſought nothing more than *him* and *his Glory*, nothing leſs then *themſelves* and their own *Intereſt*? But what a ſhame is this

to

to true Religion, that *Conscience*, the *Honour of God*, and the vindicating of *his Glory*, should be made a stale to *Disloyalty*, *Sacriledge*, *Sedition*, *Faction*, *Revenge* or any other private design? methinks *Dust and Ashes* that we are, we should tremble to make so bold with *the Glory* of the *great God* of Heaven and Earth, which is the most sacred thing in the World, as to engage it in *our quarrels*, and to make it serve to *our humors* or *ends*, when and how we list. Yet so it is daily, and so it ever was, and so it ever will be, more or less, whilst the World standeth. *In nomine Domini*, you know the old saying: and what a world of *errors* and *mischiefs* men have been led into, under that *notion*.

But I would rather these things were amended than complain'd of: and I call God to witness, the design of their Repetition is not to *exasperate* any man but to *reform* him. The likest Method to obtain which *Reformation*, is to perswade these *Dissenters* to revise their *dictates*, and to think it possible that they have hitherto been mistaken, I know how difficultly men are induc'd to suspect themselves to be in an *Error*; and that it is with our *Brethren* herein

herein as with other men, may ſufficiently appear in this; that few of them will ſo much as beſtow the reading of thoſe Books, that might give them ſatisfaction.

Veſtra enim ſolum legitis, veſtra amatis: cæteros cauſâ incognitâ condemnatis. Cic. de nat. Deorum, Lib. 2. p. 225. Edit. du Puis.

It is this Pride and Selfconceitedneſs that is the bane of the Church. *Only by Pride cometh Contention* ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 13. And ſo long as theſe *Brethren* of the *Separation* are *impatient* of the leaſt *contradiction*, cannot brook to have their *Opinions* gainſaid, their wild *fancies* rejected, and their apparent *exceſſes* reprov'd: In a word, ſo long as they ſuffer themſelves to be ſwayed with *Paſſions*, *Parties* or *Intereſts*, there's no good to be done upon them.

But could we once perſwade them (and O that *God* would ſay *Amen* to our endeavours) to be *modeſt*, and humble; and to make that their *buſineſs* which is certainly their *Duty*; that is to ſay, if they would ſtudy *quietneſs* more and *Parties* leſs; bear a juſt reverence to *Antiquity* and to their *Betters*; allow as *favourable a conſtruction* to things eſtabliſh'd as they are capable of; ſuſpect their *own judgement*, when it differeth from *the publick*; ſubmit to *Reaſon*, and *yield* when they are *convinced*; *obey* cheerfully

fully where they *may*, and where they *dare* not, *suffer* without noise; we might then hope for that happy *union of Protestants*, which every good man heartily desireth.

Now the God of Patience and Consolation grant us to be like-minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus, that we may with one mind, and one mouth glorifie God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

FINIS.

POSTSCRIPT.

HAving now finiſh'd this little *Treatiſe*, I am alarm'd contrary to my firſt intention, upon this following occaſion, to make ſome additional *Reflexions*.

A *Proteſtant Gentlewoman* being married to a *Roman-Catholick* was highly ſolicitous (and her *Charity* is very commendable) about his *Eternal Eſtate*. Whereupon ſhe applied her ſelf for Satisfaction to ſome *Presbyterian* Divines (which Party ſhe then much favour'd) who amongſt ſome other unſuitable diſcourſes, moſt undutifully reflected upon the *Church of England*; calling her Ceremonies *Popiſh* and *Superſtitious*, telling this *Gentlewoman* that a *ſet form of Prayer* was *Popiſh*; particularly, that our *Liturgy* is *Popiſh*, and taken out of the *Maſs-Book*. Whereupon having peruſed the *Service* of our *Church* (which formerly, either through prejudice, or the Direction of thoſe *Guides*, ſhe wholly neglected) ſhe is now fully ſatisfied, That there is no-

thing contained in it but what is ſound, orthodox, and agreeable to *holy Scripture*. And therefore if that be *Popery* ſhe thought it moſt rational to be a *Papiſt*; and accordingly (being quite wearied and even diſtracted with their impertinent Diſcourſes) embracing the *Roman*, hath ever ſince refus'd the *Proteſtant Communion*.

This matter of Fact (which is no feigned but a real Caſe) doth make it very ſeaſonable to tranſcribe the following words of the Learned Biſhop *Sanderſon*.

'If they (*meaning theſe Anticerimonian Brethren*) would be intreated to ſet bounds 'to what they mean by *Popiſh* and *Popery*, 'by giving us a certain *definition* of it, we 'ſhould the ſooner either come to ſome *a-greement* or at leaſt underſtand our ſelves 'and one another the better, wherein and 'how far we *diſagreed*. In the mean time, 'it is to me a wonder, that if *reaſon* would 'not heretofore, yet the ſad *experience* of 'the ill conſequents, ſo viſible of late time, 'ſhould not have taught them all this while 'to conſider, what infinite *advantage* they 'give to the *Romiſh party* to work upon 'weak and *wavering* Souls, by damning ſo many

'many things under the name of *Popery*,
'which may to their underſtandings be
'ſufficiently evidenced; *Some*, to have been
'uſed by the *antient Chriſtians* long before
'*Popery* was hatched, or but in the egg;
'and *All* to have nothing of Superſtition or
'*Popery* in them, unleſs every thing that
'is uſed in the *Church of Rome* become
'thereby *Popiſh* and *Superſtitious*. — The
'having of *Godfathers* at Baptiſm, *Church-*
'*ing* of Women, *Prayers* at the Burial of
'the Dead, Children asking their Parents
'*bleſſing*, &c. which whilome were held *in-*
'*nocent*, are now by very many thrown a-
'ſide, as rags of *Popery*. Nay, are not ſome
'gone ſo far already, as to caſt into the
'ſame heap, not only the ancient Hymn,
'*Gloria Patri*, (for the repeating whereof
'alone ſome have been deprived of all their
'*Livelihoods*) and the *Apoſtles Creed*, but
'even the uſe of the *Lord's Prayer* it ſelf?
'And what will ye do in the end thereof?
'* I beſeech them to conſider, how mighti-
'ly (though *unwittingly*, and I verily believe
'moſt of them *unwillingly*) they promote
'the Intereſt of *Rome*; whilſt they do with
'very great violence (but not with equal
'prudence) oppoſe againſt it; ſo verifying
'that of the *Hiſtorian Poet*, ſpoken in ano-
'ther caſe,

* Vid. *Pref. before* 20 *Serm.* §. 11.

Omnia dat qui juſta negat. Lucan.

'I mean, in caſting out not *Ceremonies* only, 'but *Epiſcopacy* alſo, and *Liturgy*, and *Feſti-* 'vals out of the *Church*, as *Popiſh* and *Anti-* 'chriſtian. *Hoc Ithacus velit.* If any of 'theſe things be otherwiſe *guilty*, and de- 'ſerve ſuch a *Relegation* upon any other 'account (which yet is more than I know) 'farewel they: But to be ſent away packing 'barely upon *this ſcore*, that they are *Popiſh* 'and *Antichriſtian*, this bringeth in ſuch a 'plentiful harveſt of *Proſelytes* to the *Je-* 'ſuite, that he doth not now, as formerly, 'gaudere intus et in ſinu (laugh in his ſleeve, 'as we ſay) but γυμνῇ τῇ κεφαλῇ, openly 'and in the face of the Sun, triumph glori- 'ouſly, and in every *Pamphlet* proclaim his 'Victories to the World.

'If you ſhall ſay, that the *Scandal* is *ta-* 'ken by them, not *given* by you; it is (to 'all but your ſelves) as much as nothing: 'whilſt the contrary is *demonſtrable*, and 'that there is in theſe very pretenſions a 'proper (and, as I may ſay, a natural) *ten-* 'dency to produce ſuch *effects* as we ſee to 'have enſued thereupon. The truth where- 'of will evidently appear by ſtating the 'Caſe thus.

'A man otherwiſe *rational* and *conſcientious*, but ſomewhat wavering in point of *Religion*, yet deſiring in ſincerity of heart to be of the *truer Church*, if he knew which were it, hath ſome *Temptations* offer'd him by his *Education*, *Friends*, *Books*, the *Confuſions* among us, or otherwiſe, to incline him towards the *Church of Rome*. Which *Temptations* being not able of himſelf to conquer, he repaireth to a *Presbyterian* (ſuppoſe) or *Independent*; he acquainteth him with his *doubts*, and deſireth *ſatisfaction* therein; telleth him, among other things, that he had a good opinion of the *Church of England* heretofore, whilſt ſhe had *Epiſcopal Government*, and a *well-formed Liturgie*, and did obſerve *Chriſtian Feſtivals*, and ſome kind of outward *decency* in the worſhip of God, as all the *Churches of Chriſt had* and did in the *pureſt* and *primitive* times; but now that all theſe things are *laid aſide*, he muſt needs be of another mind, unleſs they can fully ſatisfie him concerning the Premiſſes.' In this *Caſe*, I would fain know what poſſible *Satisfaction* ſuch a man could receive from either of theſe, holding to their *principles*. To tell him theſe things were *Popiſh*, and therefore to be caſt out of the

'*Church*, were the next way to put him 'quite off: he would presently *conclude* (and 'it is impossible he should do otherwise, 'being already so prepar'd as in the Case 'is suppos'd) that certainly then that which 'we call *Popery* is the *old Religion*, which in 'the *purest* and *primitive times* was profes-'sed in all *Christian Churches* throughout 'the World. That only σοφὸν φάρμακον, 'which is usually the *last Reserve* in these 'Disputes, That the *Mystery of Iniquity* 'began to work betimes, will seem to 'him but a ridiculous *begging of the Que-'stion*; and he will tell them, that every '*Sectary* may say the same to them. 'Whereas the sober English Protestant 'is able by the Grace of God, with much '*evidence of truth*, and without forsaking 'his *old Principles*, to justifie the *Church of 'England* from all imputations of *Heresie* 'or *Schism*, and the *Religion* thereof, as it 'stood *by Law established*, from the like im-'putation of *Novelty*; and to apply pro-'per and *pertinent Answers* to all the *Ob-'jections* of those (whether *Papists*, or *others*) 'that are contrary-minded, to the full *sa-'tisfaction* of all such as have not by some '*partial affection* or other rendred them-'selves *uncapable* to receive it.

'For

'* For by the endeavours of these Epi- *Id. Pref. before 14. Serm. §. 17.
'scopal Divines, some that were bred
'Papists have been *gained* to our Church,
'others that began to *waver* confirm'd and
'setled in their old Religion, and some that
'were *fallen* from us recovered and *reduc'd*,
'notwithstanding all the disadvantages of
'these confused times: and of each of
'these I am able to produce some *Instances*.
'But I profess sincerely, as in the pre-
'sence of God, and before the World, that
'I have not known (at least I cannot call
'to *remembrance*) so much as one *single*
'*example* of any of this done by any of our
'*Anti-cerimonian* Brethren, whether *Pres-*
'*byterian* or *Independent*.

Thus that excellently learned *Prelate*; whose words are so convincing, that they admit no other enlargement, but passionately to bewail the *Church of England*, whose *Reformation* is thus unfortunately obstructed by these unseasonable *clamors*. The which complaint we have all just cause to make (considering the dangerous Condition we now stand in) with the greatest enlargement of *Affection*; were it not more seasonable to put some stop to these mischiefs than to lament them.

POSTSCRIPT.

Now the beſt Method to prevent theſe *Inconveniences* for the future, is to ſet *bounds* and *limits* to the word *Popery*; whereby it may appear, when, or how far any *Doctrine* or *Practice* may be truly called *Popiſh*.

And this is moſt judiciouſly perform'd by the ſame incomparable *Biſhop* *.

* *Ubi ſupra.*

'All thoſe *Doctrines* held by the modern 'Church of Rome, which are either *contra-* 'ry to the written *Word of God*, or but 'ſuperadded thereunto, as *neceſſary points of* 'Faith to be of all Chriſtians believed un- 'der pain of Damnation; and all thoſe 'Superſtitions uſed in the *worſhip* of God, 'which either are *unlawful*, as being *contrary* 'to the Word; or being *not contrary*, and 'therefore arbitrary and indifferent, are 'made *eſſentials*, and impoſed as neceſſary 'parts of Worſhip: theſe are, as I take it, 'the things whereunto the name of *Popery* 'doth properly and peculiarly belong. But 'as for the *Ceremonies* uſed in the *Church* 'of Rome, which the *Church of England* 'at the Reformation thought fit to retain, 'not as *Eſſential* or *neceſſary parts* of God's 'Service, but only as *accidental* and *mu-*

table

'*table circumſtances* attending the ſame for '*order, comelineſs* and *edification's* ſake; how 'theſe ſhould deſerve the name of *Popiſh*; 'I ſo little underſtand, that I profeſs I do 'not ſee any Reaſon why, if the *Church* 'had then thought fit to have retained 'ſome other of thoſe which were then '*laid aſide*, ſhe might not have lawfully 'ſo done; or why the things ſo *retain'd* 'ſhould have been accounted *Popiſh*. The 'plain truth is this.

'The *Church of England* meant to make 'uſe of her *Liberty*, and the lawful *Power* 'ſhe had (as all the *Churches* of Chriſt have, 'or ought to have) of ordering *Eccleſiaſti-* '*cal Affairs* here; yet to do it with ſo much '*prudence* and *moderation*, that the World 'might ſee, by what was *laid aſide*, *That* '*ſhe acknowledged no ſubjection to the See of* '*Rome*; *and by what was retain'd*, that ſhe 'did not *recede from the Church of Rome*, 'out of any Spirit of Contradiction, but as '*neceſſitated thereunto* for the maintenance 'of her juſt *Liberty*. The number of *Ce-* '*remonies* was alſo then very *great*, and 'they thereby *burthenſome*; and ſo the 'number thought fit to be *leſſened*. But 'for the *choice*, which ſhould be kept, and

which

'which not, that was wholly in her *power*,
'and at her *discretion*. Whereof, though she
'were not bound so to do, yet hath she
'given a clear and satisfactory account,
'in one of the *Prefaces* usually prefixed
'before the *Book of Common Prayer*.

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